CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please cancel claims 8, 11, 22, and 26 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1, 9-10, 12-18, 23, and 27 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving a request to provide an indication of at least one protocol that is available to be used to perform a task on a remote computer;

receiving an instruction to perform the task using the protocol, the instruction including ~~receiving~~ a request to access firmware of [[a]] the remote computer using a remote firmware interface of a caller computer on a network, the remote firmware interface operating in accordance with an Extensible Firmware Interface (EFI) framework standard, wherein the task is to call a pre-defined function of firmware of the remote computer; [[and]]

determining that the task is to call a pre-defined function of firmware of the remote computer, the pre-defined function being a protocol interface function;

executing [[a]] the task at the remote computer using the protocol independent of an operating system of the remote computer~~, wherein the task is expressed in a scripting language~~; and

sending a response to the calling computer indicating that the task is completed.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising initializing a listening mechanism to receive the request.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising initiating an interrupt to a processor of the remote computer by the listening mechanism when the request is received at the remote computer.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising periodically polling a network interface of the remote computer by the listening mechanism to determine if the remote computer has received a request.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the request is received at the remote computer in the form of a request packet.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the request packet comprises programming code to be executed by the remote computer.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the programming code is a scripting language.

8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising receiving a second instruction to perform second task, wherein the ~~request packet~~ second instruction comprises a ~~memory packet~~ request to access contents of a memory address of the remote computer.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising receiving a second instruction to perform second task, wherein the ~~request packet~~ second instruction comprises a ~~data structure packet~~ request to access data of a data structure of the remote computer.

11. (Canceled).

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[11]] 1 wherein the response is returned to the caller computer in the form of a response packet.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[11]] 1 wherein the response comprises an error message if the remote computer fails to successfully execute the task.

14. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:

a tangible machine-readable medium on which a plurality of instructions are stored, which when executed perform operations comprising:

processing a request packet received from a caller computer at a remote computer over a network, the request packet including a request to provide an indication of at least one protocol that is available to be used to perform a task on a remote computer;

processing an instruction received from the caller computer to perform the task using the protocol, the instruction including a request to access firmware of the remote computer using a remote firmware interface of the caller computer on a network, the remote firmware interface operating in accordance with an Extensible Firmware Interface (EFI) framework standard, wherein the task is to call access a memory address of the remote computer;

determining that the task is to access a memory address of the remote computer;

executing [[a]] the task ~~contained in the request packet, wherein the task is expressed in a scripting language,~~ at the remote computer using the protocol ~~wherein executing the task is performed~~ independent of the operating system of the remote computer; and

returning a response packet to the caller computer containing information regarding the outcome of the task.

15. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 14, wherein execution of the plurality of instructions further perform operations comprising receiving a second request packet, wherein the second request packet comprises an interface packet to call a programmatic interface of firmware of the remote computer.

16. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein execution of the plurality of instructions further perform operations comprising receiving a second request packet, wherein the second request packet comprises a memory packet to access contents of a memory address of the remote computer.

17. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein execution of the plurality of instructions further perform operations comprising receiving a second request packet, wherein the second request packet comprises a data structure packet to access data of a data structure maintained by firmware of the remote computer.

18. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein execution of the plurality of instructions further perform operations comprising receiving a second request packet, wherein the second request packet comprises programming code to be executed under the control of firmware of the remote computer.

19. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein execution of the plurality of instructions further perform operations comprising receiving the request packet via a listening mechanism of the remote computer.

20. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 19 wherein the listening mechanism comprises a polling mechanism to periodically check if the request packet is stored in a network interface of the remote computer.

21. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 19 wherein the listening mechanism issues an interrupt to a processor of the remote computer when the request packet is received at a network interface of the remote computer.

22. (Canceled).

23. (Currently Amended) A computer system, comprising:

a processor;

a network interface operatively coupled to the processor; and

at least one flash device operatively coupled to the processor on which firmware instructions are stored, which when executed by the processor perform operations comprising:

receiving a request to provide an indication of at least one protocol that is available to be used to perform a task on a remote computer;

receiving an instruction to perform the task using the protocol, the instruction including ~~receiving~~ a request to access firmware of the computer system using a remote firmware interface of a caller computer on a network, the remote firmware interface operating in accordance with an Extensible Firmware interface (EFI) framework standard, wherein the task is to access data maintained in an EFI table;

~~receiving a request packet from a caller computer via the network interface;~~

~~processing the request packet;~~

determining that the task is to access data maintained in the EFI table;

performing [[a]] the task at the computer system using the protocol ~~assigned in the request packet, wherein the task is expressed in a scripting language to be executed under the control of the firmware instructions, wherein the task is performed~~ independent of an operating system of the computer system; and

returning a response packet to the caller computer that includes information regarding the outcome of the task.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Original) The computer system of claim 23 wherein receiving the request packet comprises storing at least a portion of the request packet in the network interface.

26. (Canceled).

27. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

interrogating a remote computer over a network using a caller computer to determine at least one protocol that is available to be used to perform a task on the remote computer;

sending an instruction from the caller computer to the remote computer to perform the task, the instruction ~~sending a request packet from a caller computer to at least one remote computer over a network, the request packet~~ including a request to perform [[a]] the task under the control of firmware using the protocol of the remote computer and independent of an operating system of the remote computer, wherein the task is to call a pre-defined function of firmware of the remote computer, the pre-defined function being a protocol interface function; ~~expressed in a scripting language to be executed under the control of the firmware~~; and

receiving at the caller computer a response packet from each of the at least one remote computer, the response packet containing indicia relating to performance of the task.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet includes arguments for a protocol interface to be executed by the at least one remote computer.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet includes a scripting language to be executed by the at least one remote computer.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet is sent to the at least one remote computer at a pre-set time designated at the caller computer.